RELIEF FROM ACCIDENTAL DEATH;

OR,

SUMMARY DIRECTIONS, IN VERSE,

EXTRACTED FROM THE INSTRUCTIONS AT LARGE,

PUBLISHED BY

ALEXANDER JOHNSON, M.D.

(Introducer of the Practice into the Britiſh Dominions) to divulge and generally eſtabliſh a *ſucceſsful Treatment* for recovering Perſons, who meet with Accidents that produce ſuddenly *an Appearance of Death*; and to prevent them, or any others, from being *buried alive*:

The Whole accompanied by EXPLANATORY NOTES, to ſhew that the original Practice here ſet forth, being eaſy, plain and unconnected with Medical Knowledge, can readily be followed by every Claſs of Men; that the unlimited Benefits to be reaped from it, can only be obtained by extending it to their Exertions; and that they are but partially obtained from the Efforts of a ſmall Number of MEDICAL ASSISTANTS, and COUNTRY PRACTITIONERS, recommended by the ſeveral HUMANE SOCIETIES in this Kingdom.

Publiſhed, like all former Inſtructions, at the Expence of the Doctor, and given *Gratis* to all perſons deſirous of information on the ſubject, or inclined to promote it.

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1789.

ORIGIN *and* PROGRESS *of the Practice for Recovering Perſons Apparently Dead.*

THE Diſcovery of this extenſively beneficial Practice, owes its birth to the philanthropy of a few wealthy Gentlemen at Amſterdam, in Holland, who accidentally hearing that all drowned perſons were not really dead when taken out of the water, believed it might be poſſible to recover thoſe who were only in appearance dead; and thought, if the ſurmiſe proved true, they would be blameable for not making the attempt. The information which, upon enquiry, they got, was but little, yet they publiſhed it; and to obtain more, they offered a reward for trials, and particular accounts of their event. The ambulant mechanics and boatmen in that commercial city and ſea-port, ſoon found ſubjects for trials, and making them with caution and ſteadineſs, became ſucceſsful, and able to bring diſtinct reports, that were cheerfully received, and readily rewarded. Thus informed, the Gentlemen managers, publiſhed the caſes and the means employed; renewed the offers of reward, and extended them over the territory of the Republic, without propoſing a ſubſcription, or aſking any contribution, to raiſe a fund to relieve them from ſo conſiderable an expence; and when the ſucceſs of their undertaking procured them donations and legacies from benevolent perſons, they never repaid themſelves, but ſtill promiſed, that when the gifts were expended, they would again ſupply what might be requiſite. The Police was active to give energy to their meaſures.

In proceſs of time, the ſcale of recoveries enlarged, and from particular caſes related, it became evident, that perſons hanged, ſtrangled, and otherwiſe violently deprived of breath, were recoverable by

by the ſame means. From this extenſion, more and more convinced, that the greater number of Aſſiſtants, produced the greater number of recoveries, they reminded the people, that the means were in their own hands, and encouraged them at large, to undertake every Caſe that bore an appearance of death. This invitation did not exclude medical perſons, it was general.

To ſuch example, and ſuch exertions, all the Inſtitutions and Societies of the kind in Europe, and a few in America, owe their origin; and from their general endeavours and trials has flowed the certainty of the extenſive utility and application of the particular treatment: The exerciſe of it has in no way been ſubmitted to a limited medical management, but in ſuch places where a want of ſocial convention, has made it to be connected with hoſpital duties, except in England, where a junto of the Faculty ſoon engroſſed, and ſince, has kept the diſplay to itſelf, greatly to the diminution of the benefit that might have been reaped from it here. France has a hundred ſuch Inſtitutions in its Provinces, but not one perſon in the direction that enjoys a ſtipend for diſpenſing humane offices.

Sudden deaths being more common in this than in other countries, and but few Infirmaries or Hoſpitals held open to thoſe accidents, it is plainly requiſite that every County in England ſhould have a Society of its own, while hardly eight have any eſtabliſhment of the kind. The Magiſtrates of the reſpective diſtricts in the Counties, have, nevertheleſs, been addreſſed and exhorted to take ſome ſteps towards ſaving ſuch a number of ſubjects, were it only by informing the people of the means they have in their power, to recover ſuch of their fellow creatures, who, from a want of aſſiſtance, fall too early victims to death; the coun-

try papers relate theſe caſualties, of which the fatal effects might thereby have been prevented; yet the urgency of the repreſentation has not produced the deſired effect! How can this inattention or indifference be accounted for, in a country like this, where ſentiments of liberality and generoſity are ſo manifeſt, and generally prevalent? Are there not County-meetings? Are there no Aſſemblies and Clubs in moſt parts of the country, where an intereſting matter of this kind could be propoſed and ſet on foot? Can the inſtitution of an Humane Society in London be commended and largely ſupported, without raiſing a ſpirit of emulation, and a deſire of following the ſalutary example in the county towns?

Notwithſtanding all ſupineneſs, and the lamentable loſs of time, let us yet hope, that ſome generous and compaſſionate Gentlemen, ſuch as diſtinguiſhed themſelves by endeavours to reſtore liberty to a race of unfortunate beings, doomed to ſlavery, will now ſtand forth to ſave the lives of numbers, who might be reſtored uſeful members to the community; but, from ignorance, are condemned to the grave. Aſſiſtance provided throughout the country, would reſcue hundreds every year, were only the average of 58 drowned, reported by the London Humane Society, taken as one 20th part of what may be recovered from the innumerable accidents to which individuals in the courſe of life are expoſed.

Should any prejudice remain with the people, of an imaginary danger in meddling with bodies apparently dead, the reſpectable Magiſtrates of the Diſtricts, following the voluntary example of the Dutch Regencies, will find the moſt effectual opportunity of removing it, in publiſhing and commending the means by which life is reſtored to ſuch unfortunate beings.

INTRODUCTION

TO THIS

PUBLICATION.

A Gentleman, whoſe humane feelings have induced him to extract from Dr. ALEXANDER JOHNSON's often publiſhed Inſtructions, the principal Rules for reſtoring Life to perſons who appear to have loſt it, and who has put them into verſe, perſuaded they will, in that ſhape, be better remembered, and, from being more impreſſed on the mind, will become productive of more extenſive effect, has ſent them, in compliment to the Doctor, as introducer of the practice into theſe kingdoms, for his approbation and publication, if he thought them clearly enough ſtated. The Doctor finding they conciſely point out all that is immediately required in the ſituations that generally occur, and deeming them very proper for publication, not only to do honour to the Compoſer's generous intention, but alſo to contribute to the extenſive knowledge of the treatment, now kept in the hands of a few Medical Perſons, while on a large field of benefit, it ought to be in common practice with all men; has thought proper, in order to render them more plainly intelligible, to accompany them with Explanatory Notes, and in that ſhape to offer them for general acceptance; induced only by the extenſive utility of which, it is certain, they can be to the community at large.

MEANS ſucceſsfully uſed, and particularly recommended, for RECOVERIES *of* LIFE, *from* APPARENT DEATH, *by* DROWNING, *and every other Stoppage of Breath, and generally by all Cauſes, natural or violent, where the Parts eſſential to Life are not deſtroyed; to be applied by every Claſs of People: for the former Caſes, chiefly by Nurſes, and Servants attendant on the Sick; and for the latter, by all thoſe that are preſent, or become firſt appriſed of the Accident: all without the Aid of* MEDICAL ASSISTANTS, *the Treatment being plain, and unconnected with Medical Knowledge.**

IN every inſtance of departed life,
Nature, ſtill ſtruggling, holds a doubtful ſtrife.
In caſes the moſt common that we meet, (1)
Ere death the laſt deciſive ſtroke complete,
Some time elapſes;—yet uncertainty
Attends that ſpace—it long or ſhort may be:
Therefore employ that interval to try
If yet ſome ſparks of life may dormant lie,
And either a recov'ry ſafe procure,
Or from that worſt of horrors thus enſure
Of quick interment. For experience ſhows,
That many women, from child-bearing throes,
And new-born infants, breathleſs long remain
In ſwooning's trances,--yet revive again (10. 11. 12. 13)
By means here recommended.—Then beware
None periſh thro' your want of thought or care;
But try thoſe means which every willing hand,
At any time and place, may well command.

At

At firſt diſcov'ry of apparent death,
Loſe not a moment; for the fleeting breath
May yet be ſtay'd—while life's laſt ſpark remains,
Patient attend, nor ſpare or time or pains.
Avoid the dangerous practice now decry'd,
By ignorance and prejudice oft try'd,
Rolling with violence, nor ſhaking try,
Nor yet ſuſpending—who thoſe means apply
To force diſcharge of water, to the grave
Conſign the wretch whom gentler means might ſave.
Firſt, from wet cloaths the body free,—with care
Wrap it in flannels ſoft and warm;—beware
You no ſharp ſalt, nor yet corroſive ply;
Nor rub with wetted cloths, but keep all dry.
Theſe early ſteps when taken with the drown'd,
(On whom ſucceſs firſt aſcertain'd was found)
What follows equally relates to all (2)
Thoſe who into a death-like ſwooning fall, (3)
Or ſeeming choak'd—like treatment will demand,
Cheering and rubbing with a gentle hand. (4)
The purple ſtream of life alike beware (5)
Not to diminiſh; and, with anxious care,
Avoid emetics, which may ills diffuſe (6)
Through all the frame, deem'd fatal by the muſe.
Shun all thoſe cruel methods that impair
The ſkin, (4. 6) nor, by your ill-directed care,
Congeal thoſe humours, which to keep alive, (9)
In fluid ſtate, you anxiouſly ſhould ſtrive.
Attempt not, by excruciating pain, (6)
Some knowledge of the patient's ſtate to gain;

For know, thoſe trials are a vain pretence,
While all ſenſation lies in dead ſuſpenſe.
With patience wait, leſt, by ſuch cruel haſte,
Life's feeble lamp you ignorantly waſte: (4)
From care and caution better comfort flows, (7)
And jaws, tho' lock'd, will of themſelves uncloſe.
With cordial drops endeavour to revive (8)
The fleeting ſpirits, and life's current drive
Back to its native channels.—Try to heal,
With opiate draughts, the irritated feel,
Caus'd by reviv'd ſenſation.—Next attend,
With needful help, and frequent turn or bend, (10)
Provoking motion in the languid breaſt,
Nor leave the body in lethargic reſt. (11)
Inject warm vapour, (12) and blow in freſh air;
And let it likewiſe be your conſtant care (13)
To chafe the temples, palms, on every part
Moſt ſenſible, exert that needful art.
Take a clean feather, with it, tickle, teize
The throat, and up the noſe, to force a ſneeze.
In ſuffocations cauſed by noxious air,
Or bodies froſt bitten,—be it your care
With water icy cold, or even ſnow,
Repeatedly apply'd, to raiſe a glow: (16)
Deſpiſing all abſurd exploded ways, (15)
With ſhock electrical the dead to raiſe,
Or reeking ſheep's-blood pour'd in human veins;
True judgment all thoſe vain attempts diſdains.
Convulſions, ſwoonings, wear the face of death,
Still is the pulſe, ſuſpended is the breath;

Here

Here ſpirits volatile and hartſhorn uſe,
With gentle friction—ne'er inactive muſe
O'er the extended patient; but apply
Means unremitted, every method try; (16)
Raiſe, turn, and chafe the temples, give not o'er,
Watch 'till returning breāth your friend reſtore.
In this, and ev'ry caſe, quick help and care,
With gentle friction, change of poſture, air,
With patience infinite, with watchful eye,
And frequent touch, each ſymptom to deſcry
Of faint pulſation, warmth, or riſing glow,
Are the beſt helps attendants can beſtow. (17)
  Theſe ſymptoms a return to life portend,
And with aſſiduous care theſe ſigns attend;
Contractions of the muſcles, face and eyes,
A ſpreading bluſh o'er cheek and lips ariſe,
Then ſpaſms and ſufferings ſtrong exertions cauſe,
Break out in ſad complaints, deep groaning draws;
Vomitings, head-ach, fail not to ſucceed,
The patient then your quickeſt help will need;
Pain-ſtilling drops, and ſaline draughts apply,
With camphor julep, cooling mixtures try,
Eaſe and ſome kind refreſhing ſleep to gain, (18)
Which, in few hours, may happieſt ends obtain.
  Yet ſtop not at the firſt faint glimpſe of life;
While ſtruggling nature holds a doubtful ſtrife,
Continue ſtill the means, nor ſpare your pain,
Leſt in lethargic ſleep they ſink again.

NOTE.

NOTE *on the Propriety of Employing the Common Claſs of Men in the Operation of Recovering Perſons under the Appearance of Death.*

* The extenſive degree of benefit that can ariſe to the nation from a practice known capable of affording relief in all caſes of apparent death, by a treatment ſufficiently plain, to be applicable by every perſon of common ability, is proportionate to the univerſality of the knowledge of it, and to the number of hands humanely employed in its efficient operations: the number of *medical aſſiſtants* propoſed by the Humane Societies for this beneficial work, is ſmall, and thinly ſpread, comparatively to the multitude of men found every where, ready to tender aid on all urgent occaſions. The greateſt advantage, therefore, that can derive from this practice, muſt be reaped from the multitude of hands, not from the confined number to which it is reſtrained. As the ſucceſs will likewiſe depend upon the celerity of applying the means; life, in that ſuſpended ſtate, exiſting but as a ſpark.

NOTES *on the verſified* INSTRUCTIONS.

(1) The appearance of death is known to be equivocal; none but the ſymptoms of mortification can be called certain; prudence therefore directs to truſt to none; and every apparent corpſe ought to be put to trial, by the means here indicated, for a deciſive teſt of a poſſible recovery, or a certain ſtate of diſſolution.

(2) Drowning is the caſualty in which trials to recover perſons apparently dead, have originally proved ſucceſsful; the treatment

treatment of it, therefore, ſtands foremoſt in deſcription; but its application not being confined to that accident, proof has been obtained of its ſucceſsful application in numberleſs caſes, where life has appeared ſuſpended. Its ſuperiority in number, therefore, exiſts no longer, than inattention confines its ſucceſs to ſuch partial endeavours: the occurrences to which it ought to be extended, may, beſide hanging and ſtrangling, be enumerated as follows: ſtifling, ſuffocating from damps of mines, ſtagnated air in pits, wells, and vaults, from the effluvia of fermenting liquors in cellars; farther, from the ſuſpenſion of life in apoplexies without rupture of veſſels, in lethargies, ſwoonings, in accidents happening to women in child-bed, and to new and ſtill-born children, in convulſions and hyſteric fits, effects of violent paſſions, exceſs in drinking ſpirituous liquors, of ſurfeits, and of cold liquors drank in heat. So unbounded is the efficacy of thoſe means, that no ſtate, bordering on the appearance of death, ſhould be left unattempted, on the ſmalleſt view of recovery.

(3) A body become cold (any way but by froſt) may be warmed in the following manner: it may be laid before a moderate fire, or the cloths with which it is rubbed, may alternately be made warm before they be applied: ſtone bottles with hot water, and bricks or tiles heated to a middling degree, or hot ſand, ſeverally put up in flannel, may be laid near different parts of the body. To reſtore heat generally, (which may eaſily be done with children and ſmall ſized perſons) the body is to be taken into bed between blankets and two healthy perſons, who will by gentle rubbing, cheering and chafing, bring on a mild glow, that has often brought forth life in a ſhort ſpace of time.

(4) Indiſcriminate, ſpirited, vigorous efforts, have frequently proved hurtful; rubbing violently, and with ſubſtances that can

ca.. injure the ſkin, have raiſed a greater degree of irritation and conſequent inflammation, than the remaining powers of life were able to bear, and the patient has thereby ſubſided. The endeavours ſhould be proportioned to the powers, as they are diſcovered. An over quantity of action may deſtroy the powers themſelves. Inactivity, dilatorineſs, doubt, and apprehenſion, on the other hand, are equally dangerous; the loſs of time, is oft the loſs of life, it ought then not to be waſted in vain attempts, incautiouſly recommended by the Humane Societies, ſuch as immerſions into warm water, brewers grains, ſoap leys, aſhes, embers, and hot ſand; their effects prove contrary to thoſe wanted, and the precious moment can better be employed in a recourſe to means of known ſucceſs.

(5) *Bleeding* proves hurtful, often fatal in firſt attempts for recovery: it reduces the principle and the remaining powers of life. If a perſon recovering from a ſwoon, be bled, he will relapſe into it again, becauſe two qualities eſſential to life, irritation and elaſticity, will be deſtroyed in him. It requires bandages that obſtruct circulation, and every other neceſſary operation. In advanced ſtages, and violent agitations, where its fallacious effects have given ſupport to a belief of its uſe, it can effectually be replaced by cooling and compoſing things, ſaline draughts, camphor juleps, almond milk, ſome drops of laudanum; from all which no bad conſequence enſues: and in this particular treatment, a common aſſiſtant will be ſafer than a medical perſon, who will hardly refrain from the uſe of his lancet.

(6) *Making ſick*, means giving emetics; theſe, and bliſtering, cupping, ſcarifying, cauteriſing, produce no effect, while the ſenſe of feeling is ſuſpended; but on its return, the cruel effects of ſuch trials prove intolerable, and thwart whatever elſe could promiſingly have been done. In *ſurfeits* from eating or drinking, with ſome remains of life, puking is found uſeful.

(7) The

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(7) The mouth and noſe (of drowned perſons) are ſometimes filled with mud, or (as above) with froth, which ought directly to be cleared away; but the jaws being fixed, it is beſt, without wrenching them open, to inject ſome warm fluid with a ſmall ſyringe between the cheek and the teeth, keeping the body on its ſide to vent it again. The jaws will unclaſp without trouble, when the firſt ſigns of life appear.

(8) Such cordials as do not heat, cinnamon and peppermint water, wine and ſpirits diluted with water, ſhould be given as ſoon as poſſible: a tea ſpoonful at a time only; to be ſure that they go down to the ſtomach, where they will have a good and ſpeedy effect.

(9) Acids are hurtful: they cauſe conſtriction and ſtagnation, congealing and coagulating the fluids, and hardening the ſolids. Their effects are the oppoſite of thoſe that prove ſalutary: the moſt promiſing ſymptoms being the fluidity and circulation of the blood and humours.

(10) It proves uſeful to move a patient on and with the blanket upon which he lies; it makes a change in the poſition and preſſure of the inward parts, and offers a new field for friction. Violent ſhaking and agitation, would have a contrary and unfavourable effect.

11. Injecting warm vapour, the ſmoke of tobacco, ſage, or other aromatic herb, up the fundament, has always proved efficacious; the firſt for ſtrong habits, the laſt for tender conſtitutions; a pipe, a common wood clyſter pipe, a reed, or ſome other hollow utenſil may be found for it, where the new common fumigator is not to be had.—Sharp clyſters and other evacuants, are unſafe; they weaken and affect the ſtomach and the body.

(12) Freſh air is better blown in at the noſe than the mouth: it is done with a pair of belſows, which muſt be quite clean, otherwiſe they will ſooner ſuffocate, than reſtore reſpiration: the mouth is held cloſe at the time: it has often been done by a tranſmiſſion of breath from the mouth of an aſſiſtant, into the lungs, (as is thought) of the patient; though this is not held to be the beſt way: however, as great ſtreſs is laid by many upon the effect of this operation, it is right to attempt it in the moſt convenient way that may offer.

(13) Chafing the temples, ears, neck, and other moſt ſenſible parts, is done with volatile ſpirit of *ſal ammoniac*, or of *hartſhorn*, or *Eau de Luce*, ſprinkled upon a part of the cloth, or a ſeparate bit, with which the patient is rubbed; it is held under his noſe, and ſome being ſpread upon warm water, riſes and forms an atmoſphere of vapour and air around the patient, very fit for his lungs, as he recovers his breath.—When a little of this ſpirit is uſed diluted in the wine, or other cordial above adviſed, it ſenſibly encreaſes their effect.

(14) The aſperſion of very cold water thrown rapidly and for a length of time in the face and on other parts of the body, has proved a moſt efficacious remedy for perſons ſuffocated by fumes of charcoal, the damps of mines, and the foul air of cellars, as likewiſe for thoſe that are ſeized with intenſe cold and are partly frozen, for which the application of ſnow and ice, or the coldeſt water, is known to be efficaciouſly uſed: while on the contrary, the raiſing of heat by fire and by friction, would prove deſtructive, and produce mortification. Some favourable indications lead to believe, that perſons ſtruck with lightning would receive benefit from a like aſperſion with cold water. The patient is laid in a ſloping poſture, the head uppermoſt, on boards, in an open place, and the coldeſt water daſhed in his face and on other parts, ſmartly and without inter-

miſſion,

miſſion, until ſigns of life be obtained. This method anſwers better than plunging a lifeleſs body into a cold bath, which is not eaſily done; and cannot produce as much effect from coldneſs, as the renewal of freſh water, in ſmaller quantity, readily does to an affected limb. Perſons thus treated, want, upon recovery, no other management, than to be well dried, clothed, and cheered with cordials that are not ſpirituous.

(15) Speculative means ſhould not be propoſed to common operators; they have neither inſtruments, hands nor heads, for experiments, and ought not to be led away from a ſalutary practice, to the exerciſe of which their abilities are equal.

(16) Suiting the means preſcribed to the age and ſtrength of the patient, implies an adjuſtment of them to the remaining principle and powers of life, as far as they are diſcoverable. Care muſt be taken not to overpower or deſtroy the capability of receiving aid; but to go on attentively, and without interruption, as life often returns tardily, after many hours operation.

(17) Of all beings under the appearance of death, new and ſtill-born infants claim a firſt right to attention; by chafing and cheering, many are recoverable of thoſe who formerly were laid out as dead, by midwives and nurſes. Such perſons, therefore, (and all aſſiſtants and attendants on the ſick) muſt not be diſcouraged by any unpromiſing aſpect, but ſteadily continue their endeavours to aſcertain the true ſtate of their charge, either to reſtore life, or to make ſure that there be no error in conſigning it to the grave.

(18) The care to be taken, the ſteady aſſiſtance to be given, and the ſymptoms of returning life, being well ſet forth, the mode of proceeding with perſons that are reſtored, remains to

be

be deſcribed: thoſe who are recovered by common means, are to be kept quiet, moderately warm, calmed with *camphor julep*, almond milk, ſage and balm tea; and when ſleepy, to have wine whey. When they can take food, they ſhould have mulled eggs and other animal ſubſtances, and all ſtrengthening things. Butter and fat meat are not proper.

N. B. The things generally to be kept at hand for eventual uſe, are volatile ſpirit of Sal Ammoniac and of Hartshorn, Eau de Luce, and the common ſmelling Salts, all kept cloſe ſtopped: peppermint and cinnamon water—raiſin wine—all-ſpice and ginger for infuſion—ſweet herbs dried, and tobacco cut for ſmoaking—blankets, flannels, ſtone bottles for hot water, clean bricks and tiles to heat—clean ſmall bellows, pipes, and leather tubes, to convey air and vapour—ſweet oil and camphor for unction—blanched almonds for emulſion—a phial of laudanum, and ſome tincture of caſtor, to ſoothe irritated nerves.

A cooling Ointment for tender ſkins, parts hurt, ſcalds and burns, is made with ſallad oil, in which ſome camphor is diſſolved; a ſpoonful put into a phial, with two ſpoonfuls of volatile ſpirit of ſal ammoniac, or hartshorn, or three of quick-lime water, and well ſhaken together, form a thick cream, that will be found uſeful on many occaſions.

The emulſion of ſweet and bitter almonds, called *orgeat*, or almond milk, is made, by rubbing them down (blanched) in a marble mortar, with ſome moiſt ſugar, to a paſte, in which ſome of the ſediment of the above camphor oil may be incorporated, ſo as to diſappear. Part of this paſte ſpread thin in a large baſon, and hot water poured by degrees upon it, makes, by abraiding, a kind of milk or cream, very pleaſant and cooling.